

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SINGAP 01721 210944Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /037 W

-----211856Z 040534 /46

R 210905Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7595

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 1721

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SOPN, SN

SUBJECT: FEER EDITOR DAVIES AND LEE KUAN YEW BURY THE HATCHET

REF: SINGAPORE 1687

1. ACCORDING TO APRIL 21 STRAITS TIMES (ST), DEREK DAVIES, EDITOR OF FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW (FEER), MET WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW FOR AN HOUR ON APRIL 20. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ST AFTER HIS MEETING WITH LEE, DAVIES STATED THAT CONVERSATION WAS PRIVATE. HOWEVER, DAVIES ADMITTED "IT WAS A VERY WELCOME AND USEFUL DISCUSSION WHICH RANGED OVER HIS (LEE'S) FAIR-MINDED ATTITUDE OVER THE FUNCTION OF THE PRESS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AND SINGAPORE IN PARTICULAR. IT WAS PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH HIM AND THE ROLE OF THE PRESS AND FEER IN PARTICULAR". DAVIES ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD REQUESTED MEETING WITH LEE IN A RECENT LETTER.

2. DAVIES ALSO USED INTERVIEW TO GIVE HIS VERSION OF SEVERAL ALLEGATIONS MADE BY FORMER FEER CORRESPONDENTS HO KWON PING AND ARUN SENKUTTUVAN WITHOUT, HOWEVER, COMING TO DEFENSE OF DETAINEES. DAVIES EXPRESSLY DENIED THAT HO HAD BLANK CHECK TO WRITE ANTI-GOS ARTICLES IN FEER.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 SINGAP 01721 210944Z

DAVIES ASSERTED THAT BECAUSE OF "THE 'DELICACY' OF POLITICAL REPORTING FROM SINGAPORE...I GAVE THEM (HO AND ARUN) ASSURANCES THAT THEIR COPY WOULD BE TREATED WITH DISCRETION AND NO RE-WRITING WOULD BE DONE TO ALTER... THE ORIGINAL INTENTIONS AND NUANCES OF THE ARTICLES." DELIVERING A SHOT AT HO, DAVIES SAID "IT'S SAD TO SEE A FELLOW JOURNALIST DESCRIBING SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT

AS A BLANK CHECK TO WRITE SLANTED POLITICAL MATERIAL".

3. STATING THAT HO'S AND ARUN'S ARTICLES WERE SUBJECTED TO THE USUAL EDITING PROCESS, DAVIES CONTRADICTED ALLEGATIONS (MADE PRINCIPALLY BY ARUN) THAT FEER WAS INTERESTED IN CONTROVERSIAL REPORTAGE. DAVIES CLAIMED THAT CORRESPONDENCE (NOW IN POSSESSION OF ISD) BETWEEN FEER AND ITS SINGAPORE CORRESPONDENTS " WILL SHOW WE HAD RELATIVELY LITTLE INTEREST IN POLITICAL ARTICLES". HE ACCURATELY NOTED THAT THE BULK OF FEER'S SINGAPORE COVERAGE CONSISTED OF COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTAGE.

4. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, DAVIES INDICATED THAT FEER IS LOOKING FOR A FIRST CLASS MAN OR WOMAN WHO WILL GIVE US FIRST CLASS, BALANCED AND OBJECTIVE COVERAGE ON SINGAPORE AND ITS ECONOMIC AFFAIRS". I AM LOOKING FOR ACCEPTANCE OF ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING AND GOODWILL WHICH LIES IN OUR REPORTING OF SINGAPORE AND OTHER ASEAN AND ASIAN COUNTRIES".

5. COMMENT: IT WOULD APPEAR FROM DAVIES' COMMENTS THAT HE AND LEE HAVE ACHIEVED AT LEAST A MODUS VIVENDI REGARDING FUTURE FEER COVERAGE OF SINGAPORE. ASIDE FROM ONE GLANCING BLOW AT HO, DAVIES ESCHewed PERSONAL COMMENT AS WELL AS ANY REFERENCE TO THE NOW "CELEBRATED CASSETTE TAPE" EPISODE. THE DURABILITY AND PARAMETERS OF THE APPARENT DAVIES/LEE ARRANGEMENT REMAIN TO BE SEEN.  
GRANT

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** THE PRESS, MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 21-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977SINGAP01721  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770139-0172  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** SINGAPORE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770433/aaaabcbe.tel  
**Line Count:** 89  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 3f4b30a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 SINGAPORE 1687  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 12-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2736353  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FEER EDITOR DAVIES AND LEE KUAN YEW BURY THE HATCHET  
**TAGS:** PINT, SOPN, SN, (LEE KUAN YEW), (DAVIES, DEREK)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/3f4b30a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009